

Thomas M. Modica  
City Manager

September 2, 2020

City Team:

I wanted to take some time to provide a COVID-19 update and information on how we will be continuing City operations for the next few months.

While we are currently experiencing a downward trend in new cases, infection rates, hospitalization, and deaths, we have yet to meet State of California indicators for safe reopening. Adding to ongoing pandemic concerns, we are also approaching the winter cold and flu season. This unprecedented territory requires that we keep the health and well-being of the Long Beach community and City employees first.

As a City we have done well limiting infections of our City team members, and when those have occurred been able to keep outbreaks contained due to social distancing, contact tracing, isolation, and our telework operations. Service to our community continues under the new models and our telework models are working well.

In order for you as employees to be able to plan and to continue to keep us safe, I am letting you know that we will be continuing our current method of operating. We will delay any phased repopulation of City facilities until no earlier than January 4, 2021. Until then, we will remain open for business, working remotely with limited onsite operations.

This delay in reopening will provide employees and their families with time to appropriately plan and make necessary arrangements for child and elder care, as well as other necessities. It will also allow the City to keep the health and well-being of the Long Beach community at the forefront.

During this interim period, we will continue to conduct workplace assessments and implement measures to safeguard the health and well-being of employees. This includes requiring all employees to wear a cloth face masks in the workplace, reconfiguring workspaces when possible to ensure adequate distance, and frequently cleaning high traffic areas such as break and conference rooms. When we do repopulate, the City will continue to provide employees and members of the public who visit City facilities with access to soap and water, disinfectant wipes, tissues, paper towels, and alcohol-based sanitizer. Our City's health and safety officials will continue working on protocols to prepare for our eventual reopening.



While we cannot change the biology of this virus, we can modify our behavior to mitigate the virus's impact. As the flu season approaches, it is more crucial than ever to double down on our efforts to stay home when possible, avoid large gatherings, maintain physical distancing, wear a cloth face covering in public spaces, and frequently wash your hands.

*I cannot stress enough the requirement to wear your face coverings – it is a responsibility we have for not only ourselves, but all our co-workers and the public we serve. It is a requirement and duty we all share, and supervisors are expected to address employees not adhering to the State and City requirements for face coverings.*

We will continue to monitor the disease's progression and reassess the feasibility of repopulating City facilities and communicate any changes as the date approaches. Please also know that depending on the City operational needs we may need certain employees to return to the workplace before January 4<sup>th</sup>. In the interim, please accept my heartfelt thanks and appreciation for your truly remarkable patience, adaptability, and steadfast commitment to the City's mission. Because of this commitment, as well as the skilled and dedicated work that many of you are performing from afar, the City has remained vital and highly functioning throughout this unprecedented moment in time – for the benefit of our residents, staff, and stakeholders we serve.

Until next time-

Onward and upward.



Tom Modica  
City Manager